

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 PM-03 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1455
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 7547

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, ETRD, EFIN, OVIP, SREF, MASS, ENRG, TH,
CH, UR, CB, LA
SUBJ: DISUCSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN

I MET WITH PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK MARCH 13TH ON MY
INITIATIVE TO GO OVER A VARIETY OF MATTERS.

1. ASEAN TRIP. I OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY CONGRATULATING
THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE SUCCESS OF HIS RECENT SWING
THROUGH THE ASEAN CAPITALS. I TOLD HIM THAT ON THE BASIS
OF THE REPORTING I HAD SEEN FROM MY COLLEAGUES IT APPEARED
THAT THE RTG VISIT HAD BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL AND HAD CON-
TRIBUTED TO MAINTAINING THE CLOSE TIES WHICH EXIST BETWEEN
THE COUNTRIES OF ASEAN. THE PRIME MINISTER COMMENTED THAT
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HE THOUGHT THE TRIP HAD GONE WELL AND SAID HE HAD BEEN GLAD
TO SEE HIS FRIEND AMBASSADOR MASTERS IN JAKARTA. UNFOR-
TUNATELY, THEY HAD NOT HAD TIME FOR MUCH OF A TALK.

2. VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE
WAS VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S
VISIT TO THAILAND NEXT MONTH. HE REALIZED THIS WAS A GOOD

OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MANY PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT HAD ACCEPTED THE THAI GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO BE ITS GUEST. I SAID I WAS SURE THE VICE PRESIDENT WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS TRIP. DETAILS REGARDING THE VISIT WERE BEING WORKED OUT BY THE EMBASSY WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SEEMED TO BE WELL UNDER CONTROL. I SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA IF THE PRIME MINISTER AND I MET SHORTLY BEFORE THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE SUBJECTS WHICH MIGHT BE RAISED. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA.

3. CHINA VISIT. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE WAS PRESENTLY THINKING OVER THE MANNER IN WHICH HE SHOULD HANDLE HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO CHINA. HE WOULD, OF COURSE, TRY TO GET CLARIFICATION OF CHINESE POLICY TOWARD THAILAND AND THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE WAS ALSO INTERESTED IN CHINESE POLICY TOWARD KOREA AND JAPAN. IN SOME WAYS CHINA HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL AND FRIENDLY, BUT CHINESE SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY AND ITS HAR-BORING THE TRANSMITTER OF THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE OF THAILAND WERE WORRYING. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS TRYING TO GET TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF CHINESE WEAPONRY PROVIDED THE INSURGENTS AND OF THE TRAINING GIVEN TO THAI COMMUNIST LEADERS IN CHINA. HE ASKED ME FOR INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THIS TRIP. WE WILL SUBMIT OUR CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMENTS SEPTEL.

4. VISIT TO MOSCOW. PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK SAID THAT CONTRARY TO RECENT PRESS REPORTS, HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A FORMAL INVITATION TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID HE WOULD TAKE STEPS TO CORRECT THE ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION WHICH EXISTED AND HE GAVE ME THE IMPRESSION THAT HE IS ANXIOUS TO GO, BUT FINDS THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO HIS INVITATION CONFUSING AND UNSATISFACTORY.

5. RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE WAS CONCERNED OVER THE CONTINUING AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS TAKEN BY CAMBODIA ALONG THE FRONTIER. IT WAS HARD TO TELL THE DEGREE TO WHICH "A THIRD HAND" MIGHT BE INVOLVED, BUT HE NOTED THAT GENERAL IVAN GRIGORYEV PAVLOVSKI OF THE SOVIET UNION HAD RECENTLY BEEN IN SOUTHERN LAOS. IN HIS VIEW, THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT COULD TAKE STEPS TO CURTAIL THE ACTIONS OF ITS FORCES AND OF THAI COMMUNISTS IN CAMBODIA BUT THERE WAS PROBABLY CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT WAS REPORTED IN PHNOM PENH AND WHAT ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE ALONG THE FRONTIER. THE PRIME

MINISTER SAID HE HAD ALREADY TAKEN SOME FIRM ACTIONS NEAR THE FRONTIER AREA AND THAT HE WISHED ME TO KNOW THAT IF THERE WER FURTHER CAMBODIAN INCURSIONS, HE INTENDED TO RETALIATE IN KIND. THAILAND WAS NOT SEEKING TO MAKE DIFFICULTIES WITH ITS NEIGHBORS NOR DID IT WANT MORE TERRITORY. IT WAS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, TO ACT FIRMLY. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE SAID HE PLANNED TO RECRUIT THE FIRST FOUR LIGHT INFANTRY BATTALIONS THIS YEAR OUT OF THE TWENTY HE EVENTUALLY HOPES TO RAISE. I ASKED WHETEHER THE RTA HAD THE NECESSARY NCOS AND THE PRIME MINISTER SAID A SPECIAL TRAINING SCHOOL WOULD BE OPENED. I THEN ASKED WHETHER HE WAS SENDING REINFORCEMENTS TO THE CAMBODIAN BORDER AND HE SAID HE WAS.

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6. RELATIONS WITH LAOS. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS DISCOURAGED OVER THE STATE OF THAI-LAO RELATIONS. I NOTED THAT THE RECENT SPEECH BY KAYSONE REGARDING US BASES IN THAILAND HAD NOT BEEN HLEPFUL. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED AND SAID THAT BOTH THAILAND AND AMERICA WERE BEING CONTINUALLY UNFAILY CRITICIZED BY THE LAO LEADERSHIP. HE SAID THAT KAYSONE HAD INVITED HIM TO VISIT LAOS, BUT THAT HE REPLIED THAT THE FIRST STEP SHOULD BE A VISIT TO THAILAND BY THE LAO FOREIGN MINISTER. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE HOPED THE PRESENT VISIT TO THE ESCAP CONFERENCE BY NOUPHAN OF THE LAO FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD HELP COOL THINGS DOWN.

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7. NARCOTICS. TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF NARCOTICS, I DISCUSSED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE RTG LAST WEEK TO EXPEL THE NOTORIOUS TRAFFICKER CHANG CHI-FU, NOTING THAT THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE VERY PLEASED THAT THIS DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN. I URGED THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESS FOR EARLY ACTION AND SUGGESTED THAT WORD BE PASSED TO THE OTHER TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO REDUCE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE WITH CHANG CHI-FU AND THE SHAN UNITED ARMY. I ALSO URGED THE PRIME MINISTER TO MOVE PROMPTLY IN SELECTING A NEW DIRECTOR OF THE NARCOTICS BOARD AND STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT HE SUPPORT THE CREATION OF A NARCOTICS DIVISION IN THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE. A FULLER REPORT ON THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION WILL BE SUBMITTED SEPTTEL.

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8. REFUGEES. I NOTED THAT CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS OF MEO WERE CROSSING INTO THAILAND AND COMMENTED THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION OF TURNING PEOPLE BACK AT THE FRONTIER CONTINUED TO BE A SOURCE OF WORRY. I SAID I WELCOMED THE RECENT STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER UPPADIT ON THIS SUBJECT. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE INSTRUCTIONS WITH REGARD TO BOAT PEOPLE WERE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. NEW ARRIVALS FROM LAOS WOULD BE INVESTIGATED IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THEIR CREDENTIALS. I SAID THAT THE MEO HAD FOUGHT GALLANTLY WITH US AND WITH THE THAI DURING THE WAR. THEY DESERVED WELL OF US. THE PEOPLE WHO WERE COMING OUT NOW HAD, I BELIEVED, FOUGHT ON FOR THREE MORE YEARS AND SHOULD BE HELPED. COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER WAS FORTHRIGHT ON THE SUBJECT OF BOAT PEOPLE, BUT DESPITE MY EFFORTS, I LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HIS POLICY FOR THE MEKONG BORDER WAS AT BEST EQUIVOCAL.

9. PURCHASE OF F-5E'S. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAILAND WANTED PEACE AND TRANQUILITY BUT ITS SITUATION WAS VERY EXPOSED. HE SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE THE PURCHASE OF

ANOTHER SQUADRON OF F-5E'S AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I SAID WE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER FROM SUPREME COMMAND LAST WEEK AND HAD FORWARDED IT TO WASHINGTON WITH OUR ENDORSEMENT.

10. VISAS AND WORK PERMITS. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT WE WELCOMED THE FACT THAT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT ON REVISING THE LAWS WHICH APPLY TO THE RESIDENCE VISAS AND WORK PERMITS OF FOREIGNERS. AS HE KNEW, I FELT THIS WHOLE FIELD WAS THE ONE WHICH ATTRACTED THE MOST SERIOUS CRITICISM BY AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN WHO FOUND RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON THEM ARBITRARY AND UNREASONABLE. I TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
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EXPRESS OUR CONFIDENCE IN POLICE MAJOR GENERAL ANAN DETRANGSI OF THE IMMIGRATION DIVISION WHO HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL TO AMERICANS WHO HAVE BEEN HAVING VISA AND WORK PERMIT PROBLEMS.

11. NATURAL GAS. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT I COULD NOT INTERVENE OFFICIALLY IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN UNION OIL COMPANY AND THE RTG. I WANTED HIM TO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT I HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE UNION OIL COMPANY HAD THE INTENTION OF SENDING HIGH LEVEL EMISSARIES HERE SOON AS THEY BELIEVED THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY WAS PREPARED TO MAKE A DEAL. THERE SEEMED TO BE CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM AS TO WHETHER THE NATURAL GAS PRICING COMMITTEE COULD REACH A DECISION ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AND SAID HE WOULD TALK TO MINISTER KASEM TO FIND OUT WHERE THINGS STOOD.
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